

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 19, 2003**

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**STATE LANDS COMMISSION VOTES TO OPPOSE  
FEDERAL OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS INVENTORY**

**SACRAMENTO** — The California State Lands Commission voted today to oppose a controversial provision of the 2003 federal Energy Bill that would assess oil and gas reserves along the California coastline and in other federal waters.

The Commission unanimously passed a resolution by State Lands Commissioner and State Controller Steve Westly. The resolution sends a clear message to Congress that California will not allow its coastal waters to be exploited.

The resolution is directed at Section 105 in the Energy Bill (S. 14) carried by Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM). This section requires the Department of Interior to inventory offshore oil and gas resources in federal waters, using 3D seismic technology. This technology uses high-energy air guns that are banned in California waters because of their potential threat to young fish and other marine life.

Section 105 also requires the Department to examine how state and local laws impede oil drilling.

“As a Commission, we have consistently registered our opposition to oil drilling off our coast,” observed Commission Chair, Lieutenant Governor Cruz M. Bustamante. “This resolution will once again remind the federal government that California will not stand for any expansion of offshore drilling.”

Senator Domenici dropped his bill in favor of H.R. 6 because Democratic floor amendments would have indefinitely delayed a final vote. However, the Senator has promised to use a conference committee on H.R. 6 (Tauzin - LA) to resurrect the provisions of S. 14.

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“We know what Senator Domenici is up to,” said Controller Westly. “The federal inventory is a first step toward new offshore oil and gas development. We must protect our coastal waters from drilling and the 3D seismic technology used in the inventory that would harm marine life.”

Steve Peace, State Finance Director and the Governor’s representative on the Commission stated, “Governor Davis does not believe that the future of California’s coast lies with new oil and gas development. Rather the Governor wants to preserve and protect the coast while meeting California’s environmental, economic and recreational needs.”

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**RESOLUTION BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION  
OPPOSING A FEDERAL INVENTORY OF OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS RESOURCES**

**WHEREAS**, The United States Senate has voted to pass the Energy Policy Act of 2003 (H.R. 6); and

**WHEREAS**, The leadership of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee has supported the failed Senate Bill 14 (S. 14), which includes provisions that would mandate environmentally harmful 3-D seismic technology and require a comprehensive inventory of oil and gas resources in the Outer Continental Shelf, and has promised to amend provisions of S. 14 into the present Energy Bill; and

**WHEREAS**, California's 1,100 mile coastline, with its beautiful beaches, wild cliffs, abundant fish stocks and fragile environment is a national treasure and a valuable State resource which is at the heart of a tourist industry that generates nearly five billion dollars in state and local tax dollars each year; and

**WHEREAS**, California has long recognized the value of its coast by protecting it from oil and gas development with the State Lands Commission administratively halting new leases since 1969 and the California Legislature prohibiting leases in 1995; and

**WHEREAS**, The use high energy air guns is not permitted in California waters unless their safety is demonstrated through the preparation of an environmental impact report under the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act, and consequently their use in the federal Outer Continental Shelf is likely to be found inconsistent with California's approved Coastal Zone Management Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, The use of air guns in high energy 3-D seismic technology constitutes a known risk to marine mammals, young fish and fish larvae; and

**WHEREAS**, the intent behind an oil and gas reserves study is to promote future offshore oil and gas development, undermining current offshore drilling moratoria and also compromising the State of California's role under the federal Coastal Zone Management Act, in the leasing, exploration or development of Outer Continental Shelf lands; and now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED** by the California State Lands Commission, That the Commission opposes the comprehensive inventory of oil and gas resources in the Outer Continental Shelf included in the failed Senate Energy Policy Act of 2003, S. 14, and the Commission urges that provisions encouraging use of environmentally harmful 3-D seismic technology or seeking a comprehensive inventory of oil and gas resources in the Outer Continental Shelf as provided for in the failed Senate Bill 14, not be added in conference, consistent with the House of Representatives' position; and be it further

***RESOLVED,*** That the Commission's Executive Officer transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Governor of California, to the United States Secretary of the Interior, to the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate, to the Speaker and Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, to the Chairs and the Ranking Minority Members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, the House Committee on Resources, and the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.